

Ad Clerum 2.3

Terrorism and major incidents

Major incidents and acts terrorism are mercifully rare but by their very nature they are random and unpredictable.

The term 'major incident' is an emergency services and emergency planning term used to describe an emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the emergency services, and generally includes the involvement, either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people. It may also involve other agencies such as Local Authorities, National Health Service, Environment Agency, Military and Voluntary agencies.

Anyone who holds the bishop's licence *could be called on* to assist.

It follows that trying to make any predictive suggestions about how to react, should any incident occur, is very difficult. However, there are a number of actions that should be taken:

1. With regard to terrorism, obviously, if you have any suspicion that individuals you know might be involved in terrorist activity, you should inform the police immediately - but do keep your archdeacon and bishop well informed and seek their advice.
2. If you are parish are caught up in a major incident of a terrorist event, you will need:
 - a) To ensure that pastoral, practical and spiritual care are offered to all victims and to the emergency services (though be aware that the latter also have their own chaplains).
 - b) To contact immediately the relevant clergy Major Incident Co-ordinator for your area:

Herts: VACANT

Beds: The Revd C Howes
The Chaplaincy
University of Bedfordshire
Bedford Campus, Polhill Avenue
Bedford MK41 9EA
07920 849742
Cass.Howes@beds.ac.uk

- c) To contact immediately one of the bishops and archdeacons, and your rural dean.
- d) To contact immediately the diocesan communications officer, Arun Kataria (01727 818110), and seek advice about how best to handle and deal with media interest.
- e) If the terrorist incident is related to religious beliefs and practice, please also seek immediate help from the diocesan interfaith adviser.

These events are often confusing and fast-moving. It is important that you observe the following guidelines:

- Do not go to the site of a disaster or emergency unless you are asked to do so.
- If you are asked to attend, ensure that you have your Diocesan identification with you.
(If you do not have an ID card please contact Laura Hart at Diocesan Office on 01727 818151, lhart@stalbans.anglican.org)
- Do not talk to the press without authority.
- Do not feel you have been overlooked or are not required if you have not been asked to do something in the first few hours.

The wisdom to know how to react will be being created as you pray, as you offer pastoral care and as you go about your daily vocation of helping create community in everyday parish ministry in Christ's name. It is in the ordinary that we are made ready, should it be necessary, for the **extraordinary**.

Revised April 2015.